

Open Government Plan

National Endowment for the Arts

I. Introduction

A. Purpose of the plan

This plan provides a framework for implementing the President's Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government.

B. Principles

The foundation principles of Open Government are transparency, participation and collaboration. Transparency provides the public with information about what the government is doing. Participation allows the public to contribute ideas and expertise to improve policy-making. Collaboration encourages partnerships and cooperation within the Federal Government, across levels of government, and between the Government and private institutions.

C. Agency Commitment

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) enjoys a long history of openness with the arts community and the American people. As the Agency implements the principles of Open Government, it will seek to expand the availability of information, further promote public participation in its activities and improve participation and collaboration through the use of new technology.

II. Transparency

A. Expanding Communications

The Agency routinely informs the public of the ongoing business of the agency through press releases, postings on the Agency website (www.arts.gov), and through print publications.

The NEA website has been expanded to include an Open Government section with direct access to much of the information described below. It is also the home of Freedom of Information Act reports and an electronic reading room.

The NEA Chairman has launched a national Art Works Tour through which he visits cities, towns, and communities to connect face-to-face with arts, community, business, and civic leaders. To date, the Chairman has visited Peoria, IL; St. Louis, MO; Memphis, TN; Washington, DC; Miami, FL; Philadelphia, PA; San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Palo Alto, and Oakland, CA; and Chelsea and Detroit, MI. Each of these tour stops consisted of a combination of public and invited meetings combined with roundtable discussions and tours of arts facilities and districts. The press has been actively encouraged to cover these stops.

As part of the NEA's Open Government initiatives, the Agency will augment its information sharing as follows:

Art Works blog (www.arts.gov/artworks) active / ongoing

Beginning in the fall of 2009, the NEA introduced a blog onto the Agency's website on an experimental basis. As of March 2010, the Agency has developed an ongoing plan for regular

updates that disseminate information about the Agency and its work on an ongoing basis.

Facebook

2Q 2010

The NEA will launch a Facebook page (working name “NEAarts”) which will further extend the Agency’s ability to connect with the public and disseminate information about the Agency, its work, and priorities.

Twitter

2Q 2010

Concurrent with the launch of an NEA Facebook page, the Agency will also introduce its first Twitter account (working name “NEAarts”), which will complement and extend our ability ability to connect with the public and disseminate information about the Agency and its work.

YouTube

3Q 2010

The Agency has a rich archive of video related to supported programs and initiatives. These files are currently available through the NEA website (www.arts.gov). The NEA will also post these files on its own YouTube channel in order to extend the number of people who are aware of, and view and otherwise use this video.

iTunes

3Q 2010

The Agency has a rich archive of audio files, both archival and some specifically created by the NEA. These audio files are currently available on the NEA website (www.arts.gov). The

NEA will also make these audio files available for download through iTunes (or iTunes U) in order to extend the number of people who are aware of, and view and otherwise use this audio.

Additional

4Q 2010

Following the launch of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and iTunes, the NEA will develop a plan to also launch Scribd and Flickr (or Google Picasa or similar) accounts to share our print publications and photographs.

B. Webcasting - Our Flagship Initiative

While much of the National Endowment for the Arts' work has been open and accessible to the public, the barrier of geography, along with the costs associated with travel, have prevented many Americans from directly and personally interacting with the Agency.

In an effort to assure easy and broad participation, the NEA will commit to 10 webcasts over the next 12 months of Agency public meetings. In the first year, the Agency will webcast a diverse selection of meetings, including research convenings, press releases, public panel meetings, public meetings of the National Council on the Arts, and other meetings that address issues of interest to the nonprofit arts field and the general public.

To date, the Agency has webcast a working session of academics around the notion of artists in the workforce; a press conference and discussion with 40 leading national service organizations around the latest installment of the NEA's "Survey of Public Participation in the Arts"; and the March 2010 public meeting of the National Council on the Arts.

Plans are in the works to webcast one of the Chairman's speeches to 4 national service organizations, the NEA Opera Honors and Jazz Masters performances and ceremonies; and possibly one of our State Arts Agencies application review panel meetings.

At the end of the first year, the Agency will evaluate which webcasts were of the most interest and most useful to the public and develop the plan for year two.

C. Making Research Data Available

The Office of Research & Analysis makes numerous NEA-commissioned research reports available online via the Agency's website. In January 2010, NEA also posted its first data set on Data.gov. The data set, *Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) Combined File, 1982-2008*, comprises raw data from five national surveys of U.S. adult arts participation. The data track attendance at live arts events (such as concerts, plays, and dance performances), as well as the number and percentage of adults visiting art museums and reading literature. Survey data also investigate arts participation through broadcast and recorded media, the Internet, and personal participation such as singing in choirs or making photographs. Each SPPA survey was conducted for the NEA by the U.S. Census Bureau.

In addition to downloading the raw SPPA data, Data.gov users can link to a data dictionary and information about the surveys' statistical methodology and questionnaire design. These resources enable scholars and independent researchers to better understand and interpret the survey results.

Future publications are planned for release as they become available. They include the following:

1. Research Note #100: *Come as You Are: Informal Arts Participation in Urban and Rural Communities* (Released March 22))

Attendance at performing arts events and art museums is greater in urban than in rural areas. Yet urban and rural residents generally engage with the "informal arts" (activities often unaffiliated with for-profit and nonprofit arts organizations) at similar rates. This finding emerged from an analysis of metro- and non-metro-level results from the 2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA). With its emphasis on "informal" arts activities, NEA Research Note #100 posits a broader definition of arts participation than is commonly associated with SPPA data.

2. Research Report #50: Media, technology, and arts participation (Scheduled for mid-June release)

A follow-up to the SPPA 2008 full report, this monograph will examine media arts participation rates in depth, comparing four types of survey respondent: people who attend arts events without participating in media; people who participate via live attendance and media; people who participate via media but not live attendance; and people who do not participate via either method. By characterizing the respective demographic profiles of these types of respondent, NEA Research Report #50 will assist arts managers in understanding new programming and marketing opportunities that may exist for recruiting different groups of arts participants. The report also will document characteristics of adults who participate in creation and performance through media.

3. Research Note #101: Analysis of unpublished data about arts participation from BLS' American Time Use Survey (Scheduled for June/July release)

NEA Research staff will analyze unpublished data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' American Time Use Survey (ATUS) about arts participation, looking at four-year averages to construct a participation rate, which will be reported in terms of hours per day and numbers of people. Research Note #101 also will explore on possible future implications of the ATUS data for arts and cultural researchers.

4. Research Report #51: Arts festivals study: executive summary, full report, and case studies supplement (Scheduled for Aug./Sept. release)

This two-volume report represents the first national study of outdoor arts festivals in the United States. Based on an online survey and seven individual case studies, the report will give a statistical portrait of programs, budgets, staff, artists, volunteers, and audiences associated with nearly 2,000 festivals. It also will examine cross-cutting themes and challenges through the seven case studies.

5. Research Reports #52-#55: age; race/ethnicity; arts learning; personal performance and creation (Scheduled for Sept./Oct. release)

In addition to Research Report #50 (see above), the NEA has commissioned four studies delving further into the SPPA 2008 results. These individual reports will examine the following factors as they pertain to arts participation in the United States: age and generational cohort analysis; race and ethnicity; arts learning; and personal performance and creation of artwork.

III. Participation

Public participation plays a key role in the Arts Endowment's core mission activities via its broadly inclusive panel review processes. The Arts Endowment relies on panels comprised of individuals who possess a broad range of artistic and cultural points of view and include members representing a wide range of ethnic and geographic diversity. During FY 2009, panelists who served were from 49 states and two jurisdictions, and 40% represented various races/ethnicities other than white. Most panelists are arts experts—persons who are qualified by their training, experience, or demonstrable skill sets in one or more art forms. Each panel however, is also enhanced by the service of at least one layperson who is knowledgeable about the arts, but who is not engaged in the arts as a profession. These panels play a crucial role in the allocation of

public resources by making recommendations for support, or rejection, for project applications that seek funding from the Agency.

In the past, the Agency has invited participation in the panel process by publishing and distributing a Panelist Profile Form that could be completed by persons interested in becoming a panelist for the Arts Endowment. The Panelist Profile Form is used to gather basic information from qualified individuals recommended by the general public; the arts community; arts organizations; Members of Congress; local, state and regional arts organizations; Endowment staff; and others. Information provided on the Panelist Profile Form has been used to create the Automated Panel Bank System (APBS), a database of names, addresses, areas of expertise and other basic information on individuals who are qualified to serve as panelists for the Arts Endowment. This system is used by Arts Endowment staff in the selection and approval of panelists.

The Agency will achieve greater assurance of public participation in its decision making in the future by migrating towards an online database for potential panelists via integration with the Panelist/Reviewer Information System (PRISM) during FY 2011 that will:

- Provide online access to the panelist application form for anyone interested in serving as a panelist for the NEA.

- Create an automated system of managing data collection to keep overhead staffing needs sufficiently low as the size of the data bank of potential panelists increases.

- Improve the ability of Arts Endowment staff who are responsible for recommending individuals to serve on a panel to connect with interested parties outside of the Agency.

IV. Collaboration

The Agency is committed to collaborating with federal agencies and other government entities. The Deputy Chairman for Programs and Partnerships oversees the Agency's partnership agreements with all regional arts organizations, state arts agencies, and local arts agencies. The Office of Government Affairs oversees all of the Agency's federal partnerships. Together, these offices have a strong history of ensuring that the Agency uses these partnerships to maximize its potential to fulfill the Agency's mission.

The Endowment has begun to implement internal management and administrative policies to improve collaboration between the Agency and outside groups. The offices of the Deputy Chairman for Grants and Awards and the Deputy Chairman for Regional, State, and Local Arts Agencies were combined to form the new office of the Deputy Chairman for Programs and Partnerships. This will help to better facilitate communications between staff that conduct the Agency's discretionary grant-making and staff that conduct partnership grant-making. Additionally, the Office of Government Affairs has changed the review process for federal partnerships to electronic form to make the process more efficient both internally and externally.

The Agency website now has a direct link to the various Arts Endowment partners. Each group of partners is broken out by type so that outside collaborators may easily access this information.

In an effort to increase collaboration with the public, the Arts Endowment has announced an open competition to design a new logo focused on the Chairman's theme of "Art Works." The Chairman announced this initiative in late January 2010, and the Endowment is excited to see the entries that will be submitted. As this first competition unfolds, the Agency plans to evaluate the process and then identify other

areas of the Agency's mission that can be fulfilled by opening up public competitions and contests.